

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the CT Education Committee,

I would like to respectfully submit written testimony on proposed Bill No. 5078, calling for the delay and implementation of the Common Core Standards. As a concerned parent and father of two school age children, I was disappointed to learn that this public hearing was not granted at a convenient time for working stakeholders, and proposed Bill No. 5078 on the Common Core was not granted its own hearing. Since this bill is among several proposed bills being heard by the committee, this will make for a lengthy hearing.

For years teachers and public school advocates have been warning us about the impending disaster that would be caused by the rollout of the Common Core and the Common Core testing scheme. The development and implementation of the Common Core and its related Common Core testing scam is one of the most important issues facing American public education.

Social poverty, inadequate urban resources, toxic stress and segregation are the causes of America's educational disparities, not low standards! The solution needed is not the Common Core State Standards and the accompanying national tests.

The Common Core was developed in relative secrecy and forced upon States by Presidents George W. Bush and President Barack Obama. Some of the people who developed the Common Core Standards were even required to sign documents swearing not to speak about the process.

Common Core State Standards were NOT written by educators, but by corporate business people (google the secret sixty). Some educators who were asked to validate the standards actually REFUSED to do so.

Teachers just want to TEACH and not keep getting handed top-down, unfunded mandates and high-stakes standardized testing.

According to the Pioneer Institute, several experts refused to sign off on the CCSS because they did not even meet the basic requirements of some community colleges and many universities. Based on studies by the Pioneer Institute of the Common Core, students will graduate high school at a 10th grade math level and a 7th grade reading level.

The engine used to pull off this education disaster was the National Governors Association and a series of other organizations that were paid by the corporate education reform industry, along with hundreds of millions of taxpayer funds, that were funneled to private consulting companies to "develop" the standards and tests, while pushing their own profit-making efforts to sell more computers, new software, textbooks, and consulting opportunities. Media mogul Rupert Murdoch called the America's K-12 public education system a \$500 billion untapped market.

Only after two years, when teacher's concerns were finally being heard and more and more parents were speaking up, legislative attention has returned to this vital issue.

Some school administrators like Madison, Connecticut Superintendent Thomas Scarice have joined other Connecticut educational leaders standing up and stepping forward to speak out against the Common Core Smarter Balanced Assessment Test (SBAC), the overuse of standardized testing in

Connecticut's public schools and the right for parents to opt-out their children from taking these unfair, unnecessary, expensive and destructive tests.

Common Core is basically nationalized education designed (not by teachers and educators, but bureaucrats) to indoctrinate students into what to think, rather than how to think. A great teacher has the ability to make the material engaging and interesting enough to bring learning alive! If we want students to learn, lessons must grab the students' attention and must be interactive. Teachers work hard to constantly update teaching methods and make learning meaningful for students. Common Core does just the opposite.

The point here is that implementing standards by way of high-stakes testing changes curriculum and pedagogy. One way some schools have managed this change is through scripted lessons. There is a lure to scripted lessons as they provide a sense of security; they are concrete, easy for teachers to implement and administrators to monitor. The audience and presenter do not matter, for the nuances of teaching are controlled. Scripted lessons may be welcomed by new teachers, or desired by schools in search of a concrete starting point for restructuring their curricula to meet the demands of high-stakes testing. I do not see them as inherently evil. It is when this strategy drives the school, which rings the alarm. Scripted lessons can steal important and necessary thinking from teaching. Scripted lessons are an easy means of quality control. Scripts must serve only as a temporary learning tool not for long-term micro-management.

The Common Core has bounded teachers with teaching scripts. Unable to try different approaches for different kids, teachers are unable to be creative and stimulate learning. Kids shut down. This is due to the focus on testing and 'having the right answer' rather than exploring new ideas or original thought. This approach of the Core Curriculum, where there is a national test and teachers get fired for not meeting arbitrary goals completely focuses on getting the right answers, not investigating the reasoning for those answers.

Common Core was largely funded under Bill Gates, his term used for our children, "Human Capital". Under his plan, children are not individuals but wheels in the cog for a perfect little subordinate workforce. It was developed without State Legislative Authority. It was founded in one congressional hearing, no teachers, no representatives and no parents. They were not permitted to see any final draft. Consequently, most states adopted Common Core without any knowledge of what they were signing.

I am calling for the delayed implementation of the Common Core Standards, and in doing so; ask that the State Department of Education conduct an investigation on the impact of implementing the standards, as well as preventing spending money appropriated for the Common Core implementation pending results from an investigation.

Sincerely,

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Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T